3/6/70

Dear Harold,

I was glad to get your recent mailing with your letters to me of 3/2 and 3/3.

3/2: Thank you for explaining what has been done with the back wound position. I think (combining what you say on this in your 3/3) that perhaps I failed to properly indicate how I planned to use what I did. I do not want to use it as proof of the exact location of the back wound or even of its approximate location. I think it is obvious that there is a wide range around 14cm. which would place the wound in the back. There is a 6 cm. difference between where 14cm. falls on my dad and where the docs say the wound was which was 14cm. below the mastoid in a sitting position.

Skipping to your 3/3, I note that you ask "Were you onto any of this before me?" I answer in all honesty--yes. Over the summer of 1969, I did the same things on my father for use in an old draft of what was supposed to be but luckily never became my book. I still have that draft in case you want the proof (which I think is kind of silly for me to say). However, at that time, I did it only to see how much difference there was between a prone and a seated body. I did not even pay attention to where the wound fell. These new things I did are actually "duplicating" my own work. However, I do now see what you mean by "duplicating" your work and I am at an extent inclined to agree.

The use I had intended for the pictures was to show that the general area defined by the autopsy measuremtn was in the back. It is hard for me to analyze the variance between my dad and JFK but I think that the build is very similar. I did what you suggested--looked at pix of him (JFK) before the Canadian tree thing. When he was in the service, there is a picture of his bare back which shows a long slender neck. However, as he aged, he seems to have developed a large trapezius muscle plus broader shoulders which does reduce the neck length. I have some good ones of his back before the accident which were taken in 1960. These compare fairly well with the others of him. As for 11/22, as he rode in the car, it is obvious that he was doing what you describe to relieve the pain. I think that perhaps this could actually raise the skin on the back so that a skin wound at autopsy at a particular vertebra might be lower than the vertebra at whose level it was when the wound was incurred. Do you see my point here? If the skin could be raised so that what was down by say the 2nd or 3rd rib came up to the 7th cervical, then a path thro gh the neck is possible, with fragmentation of the bullet and a small fragment exiting the front above the collar. Consider also that once the bullet fragmented, it would not be following a straight course, and some fragments could exit higher than the back wound. You see, I consider nothing proven beyond any doubt here--i.e., that the front neck was entrance, that there was only a short penetration into the back, that the autopsy docs lied about lung damage, that the back wound position itself would not vary from the time it was received to the time it was seen at autopsy due to change in body position.

If I do use the measurements and pix I did, I will not claim any great credit for them, not say that I was the first to do them, and will cite others who have already--you and Forman, and say that I'm sure many people have done this simple thing. I use my own photos because they are easy to obtain and require no complex process for getting permission to use. I will not use them to determine the

exact position of the wound and I will make it clear that I do not want the reader to operate under the pretense that these pix could even establish the exact location.

O.K.? If you still regard this as duplication of your work, then tell me. I do appreciate your thinking of me more than of yourself and I also appreciate the fact that you are steering me clear of a possible mess later on. And I too am not offended.

SPECTER*SHANEYFELT: Perhaps I can get you photostats of these pages from my rough draft. At any rate, when you see it I'm sure you will be persuaded. However, as you know, I've been working on something grand with Humes and Specter. It is enough to really get both of them--it's terrible for Specter. I've decided that I want you and Dick to know about it so that you can comment and offer criticisms. Therefore, I'm preapreing a memo which you should get soon, which will explain what I'm on to. I think it will blow your mind.

Dick tells me that Lifton has asked to be put in touch with me. He has advised that I do not and I anticipate that you will too. However, I am very anxious to hear what Lifton has to say--for reasons of my own. I want no continued correspondance, and I will tell him nothing. You have made me very curious as to what he is up to and this is a chance for me to see--that is all.

BISHOP: I accept your caution about my ideas, and agree with you there. There are many factors which make it unlikely that they removed a bullet under those circumstances. I was rash in this case.

FILLINGER: Glad you liked it. There is still my telephone interview with him which does not add much. You understand him very well. In his field, he is excellent and has much to offer in anything which relates to it. On the WC in general, he has many misunderstandings which often throw him off. I will contact him soon and tell him that you wish to speak with him under the conditions stated in your letter. Could I be in on this? I think I would enjoy it immensely. I don't know too much about him--he has a gun collection and does much hunting. As for his job, I suppose his superior is Spelman, the chief examiner--he is only an assistant (but very competant). He also works for, and I think this is a great irony, Arlen Specter. I doubt, as long as this all is to be confidential, that he would suffer embarrasment. He is an honest man and seems to have no qualms about saying what he feels. Dick has explained unprompted about the AR 15 qnd 16 and he did it just beautifully--I can use it.

How did I learn about him? Accident based on a suggestion by my father that I call the medical examiner for an interview. And how did I come to Specter--my father met him at a football game.

I will be ordering slides from the Archives soon--if there was ever blood in those tiny cervises on 399 base, it would still show.

Must go.

Still,

Howard